

where the fusiform space is broadest, there is a small rounded pit just outside that space; and immediately behind each, there is a still smaller pit. Near the middle of the length of the abdomen is another pair of pits, which are further apart than the anterior pair. All of these pits have a chestnut-brown colour. At each side of the anterior end of the fusiform space is a black blotch, and between them is a small patch of yellowish brown. On the underside of the abdomen there is a longitudinal brownish band at each side of, but at some distance from, the median line. These bands are furthest apart at the middle; they approximate, but do not meet, as they approach the spinnerets. As to the legs and palpi, the uppersides of the five distal joints of the former and of the three distal joints of the latter are orange, which is very intense on the palpi and the two anterior legs. The undersides of the legs and palpi are black, and of this colour are also the falces, maxillæ, labrum, and sternum.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

*English Botany; or, Coloured Figures of British Plants.* Third Edition. Enlarged, rearranged according to the Natural Orders, and entirely revised; with Descriptions of all the Species. 8vo. London: R. Hardwicke. 1863.

WE have waited for the completion of the first volume of this great work before taking any notice of it. Now that seven monthly numbers have been issued and a volume completed, the proper time has arrived for a few remarks. It is quite unnecessary to say anything concerning the original 'English Botany,' projected and the plates executed by James Sowerby and accompanied by descriptions (each limited to one small page) from the pen of Sir J. E. Smith. It was, and even now continues to be, the most complete illustration of the flora of any country which has appeared. But, having been commenced in the year 1790 and concluded in 1814, the descriptive part has long been somewhat obsolete, and interesting chiefly for the many curious historical facts to be learned from it. Its technical accounts of the plants were meagre, even when published, and are now very far from furnishing the information expected by botanists. Also the plates are not always such as we now desire: the dissected parts are not magnified to a proper extent, and many things required in the present state of science are altogether wanting. It also appears, from an examination of the original drawings from which the plates were engraved, that alterations were often made by Smith, which have sometimes been very unwise. He has occasionally altered Sowerby's drawing to correspond tolerably with the plant known to him, whereas an examination of the original sketch shows that the artist and the author had different plants in view. Again, the want

of any scientific arrangement of the plates, which was impossible under the plan of publication necessarily adopted, renders the reference to them inconvenient. A second edition was commenced in 1830, and carried on for many years to completion. In it Smith's part is left out, and new letterpress, of no very high order of merit, is given. The plates were, we believe, untouched, and are therefore a mere reissue of the original set, but arranged according to the Linnæan system, and coloured in a less finished manner. Imperfect as it was, this seems to have been a successful undertaking, as it is now apparently nearly, if not quite, out of print. It is therefore with much satisfaction that we see something more than a reissue of this national work successfully commenced.

In the present edition, which is arranged according to the natural orders, the original plates have been carefully examined by Mr. Syme, the author of the descriptive part, altered in many cases, in accordance with his directions, by Mr. J. E. Sowerby, transferred to stone, and printed from thence. In general, this is done in a satisfactory manner; but we fear that the artist has not always fully carried out Mr. Syme's intentions; and the colouring is certainly far inferior to that of the original work in many cases. It is manifest that the mantle of James Sowerby has not fully fallen upon his grandson. We have spoken of the author of the text, and are justified in doing so when referring solely to the scientific portion of the work; but, in fact, there are two authors, and two quite distinct parts of the book. Mr. J. T. B. Syme writes the scientific part and superintends the revision of the plates; and Mrs. Lankester adds "popular descriptions," for which she is solely responsible.

We do not purpose to enter upon a minutely critical examination of either of these three parts, but will make a few remarks upon each of them. To begin with the plates:—Plate 23 professes to illustrate *Ranunculus confusus* (Godr.); but we very much doubt its correctness. Neither the leaves nor the head of carpels are those of *R. confusus*, but rather belong to *R. Baudotii*. If this is the only *R. confusus* known to the editor, we can account for his joining that plant to *R. Baudotii*. Plate 30 represents the true *R. reptans* (Linn.), and is the first figure of that plant which has appeared in this country, except the vignette on the title-page of Lightfoot's 'Flora Scotica,' published in 1776. Mr. Syme does not seem to have found the plant in any place except the shore of Loch Leven, near Kinross—the very spot from whence Sibthorp obtained it. Most British botanists have mistaken the creeping form of *R. Flammula* for this much rarer plant. Plate 72 (*Fumaria Boræi*) retains nearly all the faults (and they are many) of the original plate. We think it a very poor representation of the plant. The new plate of *F. pallidiflora* is very far superior; that also of *F. muralis* is deserving of praise; but on neither of them is the lower part of the fruit well shown. The artist has mistaken the fleshy mass forming the base of the somewhat drupaceous fruit for a carpophore: no such marked separation between that base and the rest of the fruit exists in nature; it is altogether an invention of the artist.

Plate 153 (*Lepidium latifolium*) is a bad copy of the original plate, which is not itself good. But, as we have said, on the whole the plates are satisfactory.

Let us now turn to the text. Mr. Syme furnishes a description of each genus and species, and has performed his task thus far in a very creditable manner. We do not like his mode of arranging the plants as species and subspecies, neither can we see the use of it. It also leads to a very inconvenient introduction of new names, and especially to that of the prefix "eu," as *Thalictrum eu-minus* for the true *T. minus* of botanists. The author's theory leads him to take for granted that in this case the term *T. minus* "properly belongs to the whole" of his "collective" species (and similarly in many other cases), whereas it seems to us to be clearly the property of his "subspecies *T. eu-minus*." He thinks that this nomenclature will tend to prevent confusion; and, indeed, such might be the case if people could be persuaded universally to adopt his mixture of Greek and Latin and his ideas of sub- and super-species exactly as he holds them. But as this is exceedingly unlikely, we shall suffer under the difficulty of not knowing to what an author refers when using such a term as *T. minus*, until we have discovered the class of "splitters" or "lumpers" to which he himself belongs; and those who, fortunately or unfortunately, belong to neither of these classes must necessarily run the risk of being placed in one of them, probably very much against their will. The author himself is just in that position. We have known him stigmatized as an extreme subdivider of species, and have seen the remark in print that Mr. Syme "will soon exhaust the patience of both publisher and buyers" by the plan adopted. We do not admit the justice of this remark. It is highly desirable for all botanists to see what is really intended by authors who extensively divide plants, whether they agree with their views or not; and probably Mr. Syme might have wisely introduced plates of some other recognized forms. On the other hand, his adoption of this system has led others to class him with the very men from one of whom the recently quoted remark is derived. We believe that he is endeavouring to follow Nature wherever she may lead him, without caring for the theories of either extreme class; and therefore amongst those botanists who are unfortunately swayed (perhaps unknowingly) by party he has no friends. He seems to be a "searcher after truth," such as would have pleased the late Edward Forbes, who certainly did not belong to either of those classes. We may not agree with Mr. Syme in some of his views, but still think most highly of him as an honest, learned, and painstaking botanist—just the man to edit 'English Botany.' It would be well if he had a little more absolute power over his coadjutors, and especially over the artist.

Our remarks have extended to such a length that we must dismiss the popular part of the book in a very few words. Mrs. Lankester's remarks are clever and interesting; but they are sometimes too long, and not always absolutely correct.

Although we have found it necessary to make a few adverse re-

marks, we can safely add that this edition of 'English Botany' is really deserving of support, and should be obtained by all botanists to whom five shillings a month (a very cheap rate of charge) is not too much cost.

## PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

### ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Nov. 25, 1862.—E. W. H. Holdsworth, Esq., F.Z.S., in the Chair.

#### NOTICE OF A NEW SPECIES OF DOGANIA FROM ASIA.

BY DR. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., ETC.

We have received for the Museum a dried and varnished specimen of a *Dogania*, unfortunately without any special habitat, which appears to be distinct from *Dogania subplana*. It is scarcely two-thirds the size of the specimen which we received from General Hardwicke, which agrees with the type specimen of Geoffroy, on which the species was originally described; yet the dorsal shield is more ossified, the ribs more expanded, and the surface of the bone of the back and chest more granulated. This leads me to believe that it must be of a distinct species; I shall therefore give diagnoses of the two kinds.

#### DOGANIA SUBPLANA.

The first odd transverse bone of the dorsal shield smooth, with a narrow band of granules on the middle of the hinder edge. The first, fifth, sixth, and seventh ribs narrow, the last being the narrowest and shortest; the second, third, and fourth ribs broader, dilated at the outer end, the width being about one-third of the length. The sternum smooth, with a small, narrow, oblong, longitudinal granular patch on the hinder edge of the transverse bone.

*Hab.* India, Singapore?

The dorsal disk of this species is well figured by Cuvier, Oss. Fos. iii. t. 13. f. 5.

Mr. Swinhoe informs me that this animal is common in the rivers of China and Formosa; that it is known to the Europeans there by the name of "Terapan," most likely a corruption of the American word "Terrapin," and is esteemed a great delicacy by the Chinese, and fetches a good price in the market to make soup.

The head of the older specimen is not so large compared with the body. The animal has the power of drawing its head within the skin of the neck.

#### DOGANIA GUENTHERI.

The odd transverse bone in front of the dorsal shield entirely covered with granulations, like the ribs. The ribs all nearly similar in width (nearly four times as long as wide), and very slightly and gradually dilated at the outer end; the last rib the smallest, narrow and short compared with the others. The hinder sternal bones broad,